

P. LANE, MARK  
CIA's Warren Commission  
ORGI MAFIA  
GIANCANA, SAM  
CIA 4.01 ASSASSINATION

(orig under  
Lane)

# The Murder of Sam Giancana

## Rounding Out a Decade of Violence

There is no more serious threat to an investigation than an attempt to tamper with a witness. The integrity of any judicial proceeding is predicated upon the ability of the witnesses to testify freely.

by Mark Lane

The Warren Commission failed to secure the facts about the assassination of John F. Kennedy for a number of reasons. One of the major problems it faced was the atmosphere of fear engendered in 1963 and 1964 by threats, assaults, the attempted murder and the murder of important witnesses.

According to *Washington Post* special correspondent Tom Curtis, a knowledgeable source revealed that federal agents in Houston maintained "very extensive surveillance" of Mr. Giancana during his stay in Houston from May 25 to June 17. On June 19, he was murdered in Oak Park, Illinois.

Prior to his death, the CIA showed so much concern for Mr. Giancana's welfare that they even placed comedian Dan Rowan under surveillance for allegedly showing interest in Mr. Giancana's female companion. Yet, just when it became clear that he was in the greatest jeopardy, when he was about to testify before the

Church Committee about CIA connections with organized crime, we are informed that all federal surveillance of Mr. Giancana was suddenly withdrawn.

The almost knee-jerk police response in favor of yet another lone assassin explanation was apparent from the outset. The Oak Park chief of police said that the fact that a .22-caliber pistol was used was an indication that a well thought out professional plan was not involved. Thus another lone killer. "The small caliber of the gun bothers us", he said. The small caliber did not bother Mr. Giancana; it killed him. He was efficiently and professionally executed and the small fortune on his person was not removed.

One important witness to the events of November 22, 1963, Aquilla Clemons, stated that she was threatened with harm and possibly death by an armed man if she ever disclosed what she had seen. She never testified. Another, Warren Reynolds, was shot through the head before he could testify. Another allegedly

hanged herself in a Dallas jail cell although the only charge pending against her was disorderly conduct. Another, Mrs. Wilma Tice, told counsel for the Warren Commission that prior to her appearance there she had received a number of threatening telephone calls.

Two reporters visited Jack Ruby's apartment just after he had killed Lee Harvey Oswald. One, a writer for *The Dallas Times Herald*, was later found dead in his Dallas apartment, the victim of a karate attack; the Dallas police were unable to locate his killer. The other, a former Dallas resident and a prize-winning reporter for a California newspaper, was shot to death in a California police station; the police were able to locate his killer—he was a local police officer.

Even should one, by subscribing to the coincidence theory of contemporary history, discount in advance any connection between these events and an effort to limit the depth and scope of the Warren Commission's investigation, the events tended to have a

chilling effect upon the surviving witnesses.

There is no more serious threat to an investigation than an attempt to tamper with a witness. The integrity of any judicial or administrative proceeding is predicated upon the ability of the witnesses to testify freely. The murder of Sam Giancana, who was scheduled to be an important witness before the Senate Committee headed by Sen. Frank Church investigating alleged CIA misdeeds, raises serious questions about the integrity of the Church Committee investigation.

There has been speculation in the press that when John Kennedy called off CIA-organized efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro, anti-Castro Cubans in Miami with previous CIA connections responded with talk about killing Kennedy. There is little doubt that Mr. Giancana, who was known to have been associated with some of those involved in the CIA assassination attempts, could have shed some light on these allegations had he been able to testify before the Church Committee.